



Is My Relationship Healthy? 17 Goals Experts Say Aren't Good To Have

By [KRISTINE FELLIZAR](#)

Updated:
March 10, 2020



The Princess Diaries

Being in a [healthy relationship that's couple goals](#) can be like throwing on your power outfit before a big night out: It gives you confidence, comfort, and looks different for everyone. When you're both working together to achieve something, it can bond you together and make you feel like you're part of a team. But while it's good to have goals, experts say some common [relationship goals are actually toxic](#).

ADVERTISEMENT

"Relationships goals that can be toxic are goals that are often rigid or based upon an agenda," relationship expert and spiritual counselor [Davida Rappaport](#), tells Bustle. "When couples and/or individuals have [relationship goals](#) without grounding them in reality, they'll often create problems that can ruin their relationship."

The biggest problem with many relationship goals today is that they're typically based off of what other couples are doing. It's human nature to compare yourselves to others. Sometimes, you really can't help it. But when you're constantly [comparing your relationship](#) to other people's, you're almost always going to be dissatisfied with yours. The tendency is to create unrealistic expectations for your partner and your relationship, which can lead to things like distance or resentment.

So, here are some common relationship goals that can actually be toxic, according to experts.

1. Never Fighting With Each Other



something thoughtful. According to Lucker, these will show your partner that you care while giving you space to be open with your feelings.

ADVERTISEMENT

2. Never Going To Bed Angry

One piece of old-fashioned advice that couples still try to do today is to never go to bed angry. But according to Rappaport, this can be an unrealistic goal. "There may be times when couples become too emotional," she says. "In order to avoid saying things they may regret, they should give themselves time and space to cool off so they don't damage their relationship." You shouldn't ever let your issues go unresolved. But it's OK to give yourselves time to be alone and think about what you want to say. Putting your fight on pause and

deciding to talk about it in the morning may be better for you. "If they can get their emotions under control and exercise some flexibility, they may be able to come to some sort of a resolution the next morning," Rappaport says.

3. Making Each Other The Center Of Your Worlds



Cheerful girls embracing each other

Shutterstock

"The number one most toxic relationship goal is make the other person the center of your life," [Mitzi Bockmann](#), certified life coach who specializes in helping people achieve their goals in love and life, tells Bustle. Prioritizing your partner is important if you want your relationship to last. But prioritizing someone doesn't mean dedicating your entire life into making them happy. It can actually be toxic for one person to be the center of your life. "So make an effort to maintain your life outside of your relationship," Bockmann says. "Do things with friends, spend time with co-workers, and spend some of your free time alone. Don't let yourself disappear inside someone else and someone else's life."

ADVERTISEMENT

4. Trying To Change Your Partner To Be The Perfect One For You

Any goals that involve you wanting to change your partner in some way are toxic. As [Dr. Gladys Frankel, PhD](#), clinical psychologist who specializes in relationships, tells Bustle, "Changing a person is not beneficial." More often than not, trying to change a person never really works. They may love you, but you really can't force anyone to do something they really don't want to do. Any changes they make have to come from them. Instead of trying to change your partner, Frankel suggests trying to understand what's bothering you. "Maybe it's a trait that you have and are not comfortable with yourself," she says. If so, it may be something you can work at together. It's important to remember, your partner will never be perfect. So you'll either have to accept them as they are or find someone else.

5. Following Modern Trends To Be Seen As A "Cool" Couple



Young couple have fun in sunny day

Shutterstock

With social media and people being more open about their relationships, it's easier than ever to create goals based on what others are doing. But as [Susan Trombetti](#), matchmaker and CEO of Exclusive Matchmaking tells Bustle, compromising your true values and following modern relationship trends usually backfires and can be toxic. An example of this would be choosing to open up your relationship because everyone you know is doing it. "Ultimately, most people just think it's the hip thing to do, so they try it at the insistence of their partner not realizing they aren't really on board," she says. "It never works out well when you're just following a fad or giving into your partner." Just because something works for someone else's relationship, it doesn't mean that it will work for yours. When it comes to love, it doesn't matter what's "cool." If you're with a partner that you love and your relationship is healthy, who cares what other people are doing.

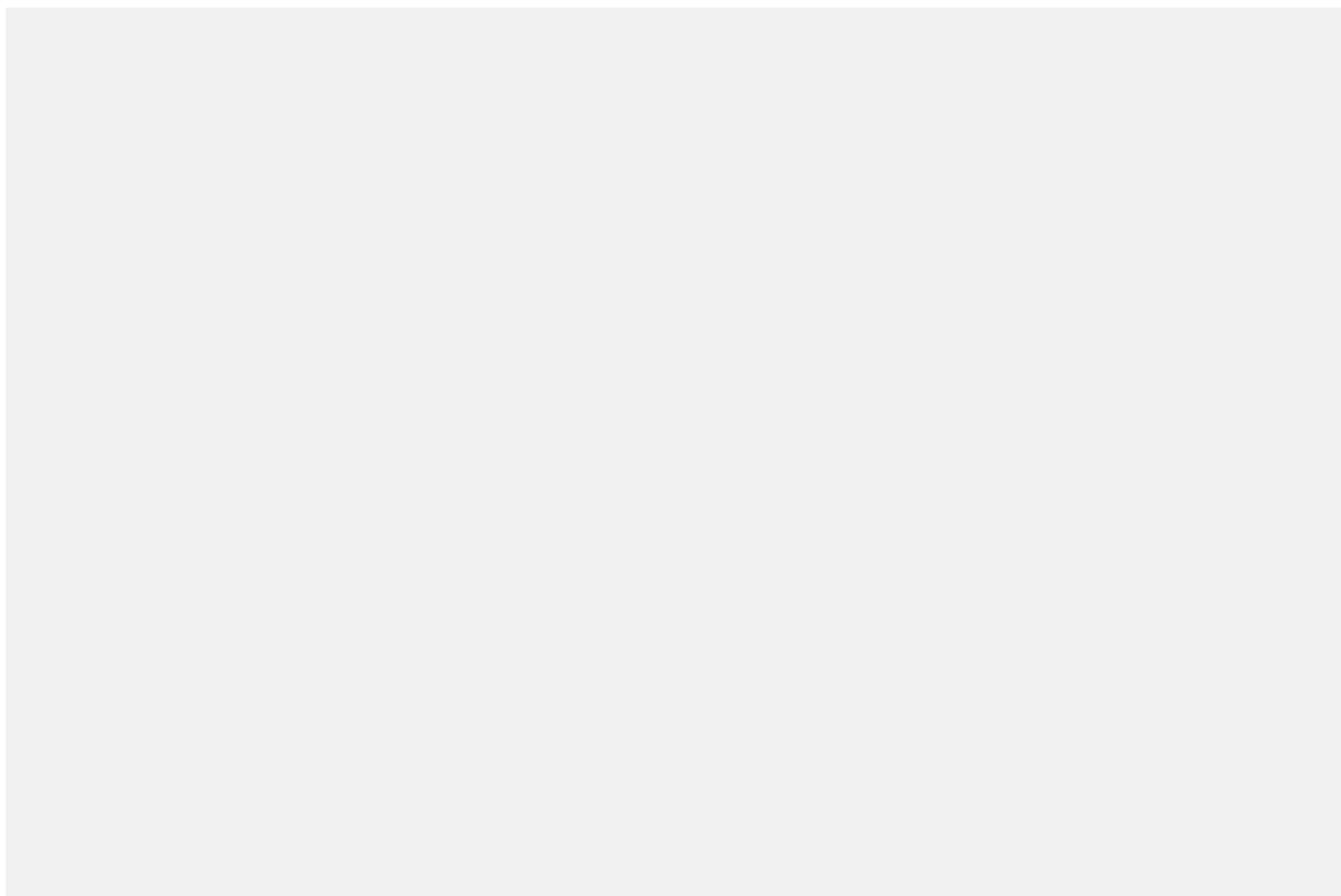
ADVERTISEMENT

6. Doing Everything Together All The Time

There's nothing wrong with wanting to spend all of your free time with your partner. This is what most couples do when they're in love and really into each other. But as [Candice Cooper-Lovett](#), PhD, licensed marriage and family therapist and owner of A New Creation Psychotherapy Services, LLC, tells Bustle, "Where it becomes toxic is when one loses their

sense of individuality and it's difficult to see where one person ends and the other begins." When this happens, it means you are [in a codependent relationship](#). You and your partner don't need to hang out all the time. As Cooper-Lovett says, just think of your relationship as a Venn diagram. "There are two circles, one is for one partner, the other circle is for the other, and they then join together in the middle," she says. "This is the best description of an interdependent relationship. This should be your #relationshipgoals."

7. Living Together By Six Months And Being Engaged By One Year



Rawpixel.com/Shutterstock

If you have a set timeline for when you want things to happen in your relationship, Trombetti says this can set you up for a toxic relationship. "If you're so focused on checking off each milestone off your list, you might not be as focused on your partner and what's actually best

for you," she says. "You need to understand relationships move at their own pace." If you both have the same future in mind, it's completely OK to take your time.

ADVERTISEMENT

8. Setting A Weekly Date Night

According to [Christine Scott-Hudson](#), licensed marriage, and family therapist, "If your date nights are dwindling into each of you scrolling on your phones, half-heartedly watching Netflix, not cuddling and not having sex, you may be falling into a rut that needs attention." Date night is meant to present you and your partner with an opportunity to spend some QT together. But when weekly date night begins to feel routine or like a chore may be time to shake thing up a bit. Consider switching it up and scheduling one really special weekend away each month, so you can reconnect.

9. Reading Each Other's Minds

Expecting your partner to instinctively know what you want in the moment disregards the key to all inherently healthy relationships: communication. "Good communication skills are essential," Rappaport says. No matter how strong your connection is, your partner can not read your mind. Instead of hoping for that type of telepathic connection, make it a goal to work on improving your communication skills.

10. Aligning Your Futures



Lizzie McGuire

You and your partner are a team, but you're also individuals with separate career aims and future goals. There's a difference between compromise and coalescence. According to [Elisa Robyn, Ph.D.](#), a wealth relationship psychologist, it's important to support your partner on their path. "This provides an opportunity to grow as individuals and as a couple," Robyn says.

ADVERTISEMENT

11. Identical Financial Security

Although you may be tempted to keep your financial health to yourself for as long as you possibly can, being honest with your partner about spending habits is crucial if you envision a future together. According to Robyn, setting financial goals is always healthy – but you don't need to be in the same exact situation. "This goal might include working with a financial

advisor and having regular 'money dates' to talk about this topic," Robyn says. "Believe it or not, money is a more stressful topic for most people than sex."

12. Spending A Ton Of Time Apart

Per Cooper-Lovett, no couple should have to spend 24/7 together. However, forcing each other to take time apart isn't healthy either. If you're making space because you think it will make your relationship stronger, be more mindful of your dynamic as a couple. "Too much time apart is never good," Trombetti says. "You should long to see your partner aside from the normal space you have."

13. Splitting Everything 50/50

"Equality in relationship fuels respect and lessens bitterness and resentment," [Natalie Mica](#), [LPC](#), a licensed professional counselor in private practice, tells Bustle. While there's absolutely nothing wrong with wanting to be treated the way you treat others, you should never think of equality as scorekeeping. In a healthy and well-balanced relationship, there should be room for each person to give a little more without expecting anything in return.

ADVERTISEMENT

14. Only Turning To Each Other

One of the best parts of being in a relationship can be having someone to vent to or talk out a problem with. But as [Holly Anderson](#), clinically licensed marriage and family therapist, tells

Bustle, you can't demand to be the only person your partner turns to when they're having an issue. You should both feel comfortable reaching out to friends and family without the other getting upset or offended.

15. Sharing Health & Fitness Goals

Your partner is their own person, and whether they do Yoga every day to clear their mind or hate running with a burning passion, their health and fitness priorities are their own. Instead of setting specific goals, Robyn suggests coming up with wellness initiatives. "Defining and setting health goals can help both of you live happier lives," she says.

16. Being Close With Each Other's Families

If your partner and your parents butt heads over who should've won Best Picture at the Oscars, don't sweat it. Although prioritizing family values is totally valid, your partner and your parents don't need to be best friends to be civil. Instead, Mica suggests setting a goal to learn how to handle conflict. And as you learn to diffuse the tension between your partner and your family, they can learn to respect each other's opinions, even if they don't agree on everything.

ADVERTISEMENT

17. Preserving Your Puppy Love

When you've been with the same person forever, you might catch yourself comparing your relationship to the way it was in the beginning. But all connections evolve over time, and that's totally OK. Don't look back — instead, focus on growth by checking in throughout the

year. As [Tammy Shaklee](#), relationship expert and LGBTQ matchmaker, tells Bustle, "It can be something to look forward to each year where you ask each other, 'How can I be a better partner?'" Be prepared to listen and provide positive and constructive feedback. And know a more developed affection can still be as passionate as puppy love.

By redefining the goals you set for you and your partner, you can focus on growing together as a couple, instead of applying force or pressure on your relationship. And if you find your connection has turned toxic, it's always OK to walk away.

Sources:

[Davida Rappaport](#), relationship expert and spiritual counselor

[Mitzi Bockmann](#), certified life coach

[Susan Trombetti](#), matchmaker and CEO of Exclusive Matchmaking

[Tammy Shaklee](#), relationship expert and LGBTQ matchmaker

[Rachel Federoff](#), relationship expert and co-owner of Love and Matchmaking

Experts:

[Sheila Tucker](#), licensed associate family and marriage therapist and owner of Heart Mind and Soul Counseling

[Gladys Frankel](#), PhD, clinical psychologist

[Candice Cooper-Lovett PhD](#), licensed marriage and family therapist and owner of A New Creation Psychotherapy Services, LLC

Christine Scott-Hudson, licensed marriage and family therapist

Elisa Robyn, PhD, a wealth relationship psychologist

Holly Anderson, clinically licensed marriage and family therapist

Natalie Mica, LPC, a licensed professional counselor in private practice

ADVERTISEMENT

This article was originally published on July 17, 2019
